

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A connector terminal (1), comprising:

at least one press-in portion (3) to be pressed into a housing (10) in a pressing direction (PD) and to be accommodated in the housing (10), the press-in portion (3) comprising a base (5) having at least one side surface formed with at least one press-in section (5a) to be pressed into the housing (10), and at least one branch (6) branched off the base (5) and having an outer surface formed with at least one press-in section (6a) to be pressed into the housing (10), the press-in section (5a) on the base (5) defining a projecting distance (PD5) in a direction substantially normal to the pressing direction (PD) that is larger than a projecting distance (PD6) of the press-in section (6a) on the branch (6).

2. The connector terminal of claim 1, wherein the base (5) has opposite side surfaces, each of the opposite side surfaces of the base (5) having at least one of said press-in sections (5a) to be pressed into the housing (10), and the at least one branch (6) comprising a plurality of branches (6) branched off from the base (5) and formed on opposite side surfaces thereof with press-in sections (6a) to be pressed into the housing (10), a width (D1) between the press-in sections (5a) on the base (5) being larger than a width (D3) between the press-in sections (6a) on the branches (6).

3. The connector terminal of claim 2, wherein a tab (2) extends unitarily from the press-in portion (5) for fitting into a mating terminal, the branches (6) branched off from the base (5) extending in a direction substantially opposite from the tab (2).

4. The connector terminal of claim 2, wherein only one press-in section (6a) is formed on each side surface of each branch (6).

5. The connector terminal of claim 2, wherein the press-in sections (6a) formed on the branches (6) are at base ends of the branches (6).

6. The connector terminal of claim 2, wherein the branches (6) comprise an engaging portion (6b) for connection with an external circuit.

7. A terminal (104) to be mounted into a connector (101) by inserting the terminal (104) along an insertion direction (ID) into a housing (102) of the connector (101), wherein the terminal (104) includes

an inserting portion (143) formed unitarily with a tab (141) and insertable along the inserting direction (ID) into a mount hole (125) penetrating a mount portion (121) of the housing (102), and

a plurality of locks (144a; 144b) projecting in a direction substantially normal to the inserting direction (ID) and spaced apart along the longitudinal direction of the terminal (104) so as to locate the inserting portion (143) therebetween.

8. The terminal of claim 7, wherein each lock (144a; 144b) of the terminal (104) has two protuberances (144a1, 144a2; 144b1, 144b2) projecting in substantially opposite directions.

9. The terminal of 8, wherein a distance (S) between the locks (144a; 144b) of the terminal (104) is less than a length (L) of the mount portion (121) of the housing (102) along a longitudinal direction of the terminal (104).

10. A connector (101), comprising:

a terminal having an inserting portion (143) formed unitarily with a tab (141) and a plurality of locks (144a; 144b) projecting from the inserting portion (143) and spaced apart along a longitudinal direction of the terminal (104) so as to locate the inserting portion (143) therebetween; and

a housing (102) having a mount hole (125) with a guide hole (125a) into which the inserting portion (143) can be inserted along an inserting direction (ID), but dimensioned to prevent insertion of the locks (144a; 144b), and a insertion portion (125b) integrally formed with the guide hole (125a) and bulging out substantially normal to the inserting direction (ID) from the guide hole (125a) to permit insertion of the lock (144a; 144b).

11. The connector (101) of claim 10, wherein each lock (144a; 144b) of the terminal (104) has protuberances (144a1, 144a2; 144b1, 144b2) projecting in substantially opposite directions from the inserting portion (143), and the insertion portion (125b) comprises a slit (125b) formed at two substantially facing positions at the opposite sides of the guide hole (125a).

12. The connector (101) of claim 10, wherein the mount portion (121) is held between the locks (144a; 144b) when the terminal (104) is mounted into the mount portion (121).

13. A method of mounting at least one terminal (104) into a connector housing (102) of a connector (101), comprising the following steps:

providing a terminal (104) including an inserting portion (143) integrally formed with a tab (141) and a plurality of locks (144a; 144b) projecting in a direction at an angle to the inserting direction (ID) from the inserting portion (143) and spaced apart along the longitudinal direction of the terminal (104) so as to locate the inserting portion (143) therebetween,

providing the housing (102) having a mount hole (125) which includes a guide hole (125a) into which the inserting portion (143) can be inserted, but into which the locks (144a; 144b) cannot be inserted, and an insertion portion (125b) integrally formed with the guide hole (125a) and bulging out at an angle to the inserting direction (ID) from the guide hole (125a) to permit insertion of at least one lock (144a; 144b), and

inserting the terminal fitting (104) along an inserting direction (ID) into the mount hole (125).

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising turning the terminal (102) about its longitudinal axis to engage the respective locks (144a; 144b) with the mount portion (121) after having one said lock (144a; 144b) thereof inserted into the insertion portion (125b) of the housing (102).

15. A connector (201; 205), comprising:  
a housing (202; 206), and  
a terminal (203; 207) to be inserted into the housing (202; 206),  
wherein one of the housing (202; 206) and the terminal (203; 207) is formed with a flexible engaging piece (323; 613), and the other of the housing (202; 206) and the terminal (203; 207) is formed with an engaging portion (2212; 722) engageable with the engaging piece (323; 613) to prevent the terminal (203; 207) from coming out of the housing (202; 206).

16. The connector of claim 15, wherein the terminal (203; 207) is formed unitarily with a tab (231; 271) at least partly fittable into a mating terminal and includes at least one press-in section (321; 721) to be pressed into the housing (202; 206).

17. The connector of claim 16, wherein:  
the terminal (203; 207) has four outer surfaces to be opposed to the housing (202; 206),  
the press-in section (321; 721) is formed on each of two opposite outer surfaces (232a-d; 272a-d), and  
one of the locking piece and the engaging piece (323; 613) is formed on each of two remaining opposite outer surfaces (232a-d; 272a-d).

18. The connector of claim 15, wherein the terminal (203; 207) is formed with the engaging pieces (323; 613), and the housing (202; 206) is formed with engaging projections (2212) engageable with the engaging pieces (323; 613) to prevent the terminal (203; 207) from coming out of the housing (202; 206).

19. The connector of claim 18, wherein:

the terminal (203) has a substantially flat portion and is formed with a plurality of engaging pieces (323) by making cuts in the substantially flat portion and bending cut sections in opposite directions.

20. The connector of claim 19, wherein the housing (202; 206) includes a pair of facing surfaces (2211) to face the outer surfaces of the terminal (203; 207) where the engaging pieces (323; 613) are formed, and

each of the facing surfaces (2211) is formed with the engaging projection (2212) engageable with the corresponding engaging piece (323) to prevent the terminal (203; 207) from coming out of the housing (202; 206).

21. The connector of claim 15, wherein the housing (206) is formed with the engaging piece (613) and the terminal (207) is formed with an engaging hole (722) engageable with the engaging piece (323; 613) to prevent the terminal (203; 207) from coming out of the housing (202; 206).